

Strategies

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CREAM CHEESE PASTRY

Makes: Enough for 10 pocket pies / Preparation time: 10 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened

4 ounces cream cheese, softened

1/4 cup heavy whipping cream

1 1/2 cups plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, plus more for rolling out dough

1/2 teaspoon coarse salt

In a food processor or using an electric mixer or by hand, process the butter, cream cheese and heavy whipping cream.

Add the flour and salt; process just until combined and the dough holds together in a ball. Turn the dough out onto a well-floured surface and divide in 2 pieces. Flatten into disks and wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before rolling out. If the dough is chilled overnight, take it out 15 minutes before rolling out.

Rub flour all over a rolling pin. Working with one disk at a time, place the disk on a clean, well-floured surface. Roll gently from the center of the dough to the top and bottom edges. Rotate the disk, and roll to the top and bottom edges again. Reflour the work surface and rolling pin, turn the dough over and continue to roll the dough from the center out to the edges. Turn over and roll again, rotating the disk to ensure even rolling until the dough is about 12 inches in diameter, thin but not transparent.

186 calories (68 percent from fat), 14 grams fat (9 grams sat. fat), 12 grams carbohydrates, 2 grams protein, 155 mg sodium, 41 mg cholesterol, 0 grams fiber.

SAVORY CHICKEN POCKET PIES

Makes: 10 / Preparation time: 20 minutes

Total time: 2 hours, 20 minutes (not all active time)

"One of the kids came home from school one day asking for Hot Pockets, saying he'd eaten them at a friend's house. ... They are processed, laden with preservatives and expensive, and I loathe them. Still, their utility is undeniable. So I decided to re-create a similarly attractive homemade version — something the kids could quickly heat up by themselves and snack on," writes Quinn.

1 heaping cup of shredded chicken from 1 chicken (3 pounds); freeze remainder for other recipes

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1/2 cup chopped onion

1/3 cup chopped celery

1/3 cup chopped carrot (1 carrot)

1/2 teaspoon coarse salt

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 1/2 cups chicken broth (from the

reduced poaching liquid)

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1 recipe (2 disks) Cream Cheese Pastry (recipe below)

1 large egg, for egg wash

Place the chicken in a pot and add water to barely cover. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 50 minutes. Skim and discard any foam as it rises to the surface. Remove the chicken to cool. Continue to boil the broth to reduce to about 1 quart. Remove the meat from the chicken and shred.

To make the filling, in a medium hot skillet, melt the butter and add the onion, celery and carrot. Saute over medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the salt and flour and cook for 1 minute more. Add the chicken broth and stir until

thickened, about 2 minutes. Stir in 1 heaping cup shredded chicken and the Parmesan cheese. Cool in the fridge.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Butter or line a baking sheet.

To form the pocket pies, work with half of a disk of dough at a time, rolling it out on a floured surface to about 12 inches in diameter. Using an overturned bowl (about 5 inches across), cut out about 3 circles from each piece of dough. After cutting out all your circles, gather all dough scraps, reroll, and cut out a final time. Place 1/4 cup filling on one side of a dough circle. Wet the edges of the dough with water. Fold the dough over to form a half-circle. Pinch the edges of the dough together. Crimp the edges with a fork. Repeat the process until all the filling is used. The pocket

pies can be frozen at this point.

Place the pocket pies on the prepared baking sheet and chill for a few minutes. Prick each pie on top twice with a fork. When ready to bake, beat the egg with 1 tablespoon water. Brush the egg wash over each pocket pie. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until golden brown. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving. The pies can be cooled and frozen to reheat in the microwave.

Analysis per 1 pocket.

257 calories (63 percent from fat), 18 grams fat (11 grams sat. fat), 15 grams carbohydrates, 8 grams protein, 235 mg sodium, 61 mg cholesterol, 0 grams fiber.

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